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Teresa, Vincent

Castro plot charge denied by Patriarca

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Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — Reputed New England organized crime chief Raymond L.S. Patriarca yesterday denied charges he was involved in an alleged Central Intelligence Agency 1—underworld plot to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro.

The allegation was made in a 300-page deposition given by underworld songbird Vincent "Fat Vinnie" Teresa filed in U.S. District Court in Miami in connection with a \$100 million libel suit against Rolling Stone magazine.

"I was there when the information came in for Henry Tameleo and Raymond Patriarca and they picked Maurice Lerner to do the work," Teresa said.

His sworn statement was taken Jan. 31 in San Francisco and later filed in Miami.

Teresa did not elaborate on where or when Tameleo and Patriarca received the "information," but he revealed the price of the Castro "hit" was to have been \$4 million.

Patriarca, reached by The Herald American at his National Cigarette Service Company headquarters here, said Teresa's allegations were "crazy."

"I've been through this before," he said. "If you believe anything Teresa says you have to be crazier than he is."

In 1970 Patriarca was convicted of conspiracy to murder Rudolph Marfeo in April 1968 and given a maximum 10 year prison sentence. He was released on parole last year.

At the same time Lerner was found guilty of first degree murder and conspiracy in the slaying of Marfeo and Anthony Meiei in a Providence grocery store. He is serving a life sentence for the slayings.

"I never knew Pro Lerner (formerly of Brookline) until they framed him like they framed me," Patriarca said. "He (Teresa) hustled his mother for \$2 and if you believe him then you are crazy."

Lerner, in a prison interview, said "The accusation isn't true."

Teresa alleged that mob figure

John Roselli was recruited by the CIA to have Castro eliminated.

Roselli was murdered in Miami in August 1976. His body was found in a chain-wrapped oil drum floating in Biscayne Bay. An autopsy determined he died of asphyxiation.

Roselli testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee in June 1975, and stated he and Sam "Momo" Giancana, a Chicago underworld boss, were offered \$100,000 by the CIA to join a plot to poison Castro in 1961. He agreed to help for no charge.

Roselli's testimony came five days after Giancana was shot to death in his Chicago mansion June 19, 1975.

Teresa, an admitted gambler, thief and swindler, was connected with organized crime in the Boston area and has testified for the government at more than a dozen mob trials.

He has been provided with a new identity and is in hiding from underworld retaliation for his cooperation with law enforcement officials.

Teresa's deposition was filed as a potential defense witness in a 1976 libel suit brought against Rolling Stone by Resorts International, a Miami company that runs Paradise Island casino in the Bahamas.

In a published article, Rolling Stone said the casino was connected with the mob. The company, which is seeking to open a casino in Atlantic N.J., denies the allegation.

CIA Assistant Deputy Director Dennis Berend told The Herald American the agency would have "no comment" on Teresa's allegations.

"I have to confess—I don't know Teresa," Berend said. "I'll have to check with our lawyers to see what this is all about."

When asked if the agency had been involved in a plot to kill Castro, Berend refused to answer.

Teresa's revelation is only one in a series of allegations pointing to a CIA-mob-Castro assassination plot. To date, none of the allegations has been proven.